

for a small hospital in the district. They would like to give some district work if it could be done under supervision.

Miss Greenwood said that in her hospital the nurses were taught the executive management of all the departments, and that they were now considering district nursing.

Miss Nevins said that she thought it would be found that many small schools were making a feature of teaching the executive management and office work of the hospital in the third year.

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## POST-GRADUATE STUDY FOR NURSES

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WHEN asked by the chairman of the Committee on Education of this society to prepare a schedule on this subject to be sent to the hospitals throughout America it was with something like the feelings of a probationer that I consented. To sort, arrange and tabulate, and put the material into comprehensive shape was easily anticipated to be a very difficult subject.

Nevertheless, these schedules were prepared in two forms, one to be sent to the general hospitals and the other to the "special" or post-graduate hospitals. Over four hundred of these schedules were sent; none were sent to hospitals containing less than twenty-five beds. Two hundred and sixty-three were returned, with five letters pertaining to the work. This means that nearly two hundred schedules were not returned, although many had a second notice sent to them.

One's first impression upon being confronted with this pile of literature was, "What an enormous piece of work to sort, arrange, and tabulate," but, alas! the greater number were blanks; and the next feeling was, "Is there any graduate nursing instruction given in America?"

Upon closer inspection one finds there is some "regular" work done in the post-graduate hospitals and a very little "irregular" work in the general hospitals. Before considering the question from any of its many points of view, let us see what is being done, as far as we are able, from the schedules returned and subsequent letters written. It was unfortunate that such a large number of the schedules were not returned, as it prevented making a complete report.

## POST-GRADUATE WORK IN THE GENERAL HOSPITALS.

From the general hospitals of one hundred beds or more to which schedules were sent one hundred and fourteen were returned.

Of these twenty-six only give a supplementary "irregular" post-graduate course, while four conduct a regular course. Ten of these schools admit only their own graduates. Sixteen admit graduates from any recognized school.

Of these twenty-six schools only three make any provision for a regular course of lectures and class work. The others permit the graduates to attend the lectures and classes of the pupil nurses, but as many of the schools admit the graduate nurses only during the vacation season there are no lectures and classes to attend. The length of the course varies from six weeks to one year; the number of applicants from three or four yearly to as many as one hundred and fifty; the number of graduate nurses admitted from two yearly to one hundred and ten. In one a fee is charged of one dollar per day, while in others we find allowances given of varying amounts to as much as twenty dollars per month.

In some instances the graduate nurses live outside of the hospital buildings, board only being furnished, in others they are permitted to live in the Nurses' Home and allowed board and laundry privileges.

From the general hospitals of fifty to one hundred beds eighty-two schedules were returned; of these only three give irregular post-graduate instruction, two to their own graduates and one to graduates from other schools, the course varying in length from six months to one year. No provision is made for special instruction in any of them.

From the general hospitals of twenty-five to fifty beds forty-seven papers were returned; of these two give a supplementary post-graduate course, one in obstetrics and one in massage, both arranging for special instruction in these branches.

## POST-GRADUATE WORK IN THE SPECIAL HOSPITALS.

The second schedule was prepared with special reference to the post-graduate hospitals or the so-called "special" hospitals. From these twenty schedules were returned, with five letters pertaining to this work. Of these only one, the Presbyterian of Chicago, conducts a course in general work. This has already been included in the summary of general hospitals. In eight of these hospitals all the nursing is done by graduate nurses, in the remaining twelve it is done by a combination of graduates and pupils secured in some instances by means of the "exchange" system, in others there are organized training-schools to which pupils are admitted for a regular course of training.

Lectures and classes are provided in fourteen of these schools.

The majority give no allowance while others give from six dollars to fifteen dollars per month.

The length of the courses varies from ten weeks to nine months; the hours for duty vary from eight hours daily in one to twelve hours in six.

Nine conduct examinations and twelve give either a certificate or diploma at the end of the course.

Twelve have permanent graduate nurses in charge of the wards.

These hospitals specialize usually in one branch of work, such as obstetrics, eye and ear diseases, surgery, orthopædics, gynæcology, and summer diseases of infants and children.

We find certain unique features in connection with some of these hospitals, such as the training of nursery-maids, classes for mothers in the care of their children and preparation of food, as conducted in the Infants' and Floating Hospitals of Boston and the Thomas Wilson Sanitarium, Maryland.

It will be seen, after listening to these somewhat wearisome statistics, that very little is being done in the general hospital towards establishing a systematic course of study for the graduate nurse.

In the so-called special hospital we find some well-arranged courses, and these are certainly of great value to nurses who feel the necessity of additional training in special branches, but they only meet the demand in a limited way.

There seems to be a conspicuous lack of uniformity in details of the courses in both kinds of hospitals. This may be necessary, as the work must be done in different places in different ways. Yet it seems that in a special hospital conducting a post-graduate school that certain salient features could be made more uniform, such as the questions of allowances, lectures, classes, demonstrations, examinations, system of marking, granting of certificates or diplomas, and the hours for duty.

We find in one no allowance, in another as much as twenty dollars per month; in one no provision for class work, no lectures, and no examinations, yet a certificate is given; in one, eight hours daily duty and in the large majority twelve hours.

In the general hospital where no claim is made towards conducting a graduate course of study and where the nurse is allowed unsolicited to return for a general "freshening," it could hardly be expected to be otherwise than shown in many of the hospitals reported.

It is not the object of this paper to underrate or criticise the work being done in the general hospital giving irregular post-graduate work or the special hospital giving an organized course. Much good work has

been done in both places, and many nurses have been benefited by taking advantage of these post-graduate opportunities, but after careful study of these returned schedules we feel that much too little is being done, and that it does not meet the greatest need in the nursing world.

#### IS THERE A REAL NEED FOR POST-GRADUATE STUDY?

By the individual who is interested in nurses and their various kinds of work, the management of registries, the organization of alumnae and State associations, the answer would certainly be in the affirmative.

If we are a profession, then surely there is an absolute necessity for advanced study. If we wish to see this profession placed on a strong basis, then we must be strong as a body in the fundamental principles underlying our work. If we attempt to take a position in the front ranks of the progressive movements of the age and, what is more important, stay there, we must as individuals be thoroughly prepared, and this can only be done by courses of study which have been organized on a permanent educational basis. To those of us who manage registries we find a great demand for the "recent" graduate by the physician and the public. Indeed, it is frequently difficult to obtain work for the graduate of ten or fifteen years ago. The criticism is usually that she is "old-fashioned," "slow," and "behind the times," whereas the recent graduate is "up to date" and understands all the principles of modern surgery, is quick and not so "set" as the older graduate; these and many others are the criticisms made and reasons given for desiring the recent graduate. We too often, alas! see the older graduate standing still perfectly satisfied with her own ways, unwilling to join the alumnae association or the State societies, taking no interest in State registration, and even refusing to subscribe for *THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING*. She complains that the registry treats her unjustly and that the recent graduate is given the preference. Call her attention to the advances made in medicine and nursing in recent years, and suggest that she could take her place with the recent graduate if she were to pursue a course of study in some of the post-graduate schools, and you have offered her the deepest injury.

Compare this condition with that existing in the medical profession and we find the situation reversed; it is not the recent graduate who is preferred, it is the man of years of experience and mature judgment. Contrast the average physician with her. He haunts the operating-rooms and wards of accessible hospitals, he grasps every opportunity to visit the great centres of his profession, the local and State medical meetings are well attended, and his office and library table are well filled with medical journals and periodicals. To be able to keep up in this age of

competition, the physician must grasp every opportunity for a wider knowledge. The nurse needs to do the same. Because she graduated fifteen years ago should not stand in her way of taking first place in whatever line of nurses' work she elects to pursue.

Those of us, as the heads of hospitals or training-schools, who are struggling to secure competent assistants and head nurses feel, perhaps more than anyone else, the need of a post-graduate course of work where the graduate can secure an "all-around" training in practical hospital housekeeping, which should include the various housekeeping departments, such as kitchen and laundry, storerooms, linen-rooms, even such practical details as the cutting and making of hospital garments, the ordering of all kinds of supplies, domestic, surgical, and pharmacy, and something of the business management of such an institution. Such training will not only fill the need now felt by the graduate herself, but would secure to hospitals an opportunity to fill their positions with prepared women. These reasons alone, without considering any others, are sufficient to show the pressing need of well-arranged, systematic courses of post-graduate study.

The next point to consider is the demand for such work.

It is noticeable in these general and special hospitals that the number of applicants for such work and study is constantly increasing. It is an exceedingly gratifying indication and goes to prove that the graduate nurse of to-day is alive to the necessity for action in this direction. This is unquestionably the result of the progressive movements in the nursing world, the advances in scientific medicine, and the demand for only the best by physicians and an exacting public.

The motives which prompt a nurse to undertake a post-graduate course of work are manifold. It may be because her practical training, even in the largest and best schools, has been limited to two branches, medical and surgical nursing, or she may be a graduate from a very small school with few opportunities or chances for experience, or she may have spent the larger part of her time doing private nursing for the hospital. She may wish to push her investigations further and add to her fund of knowledge simply for the love of it. It is possible that she desires to fit herself for institutional work and has tried the position of head nurse in her own hospital, and that this experience has developed a wish for a broader knowledge, and she tries some of the post-graduate courses open to her, hoping to find what she wants. Given the desire for advanced post-graduate study on the part of a nurse, no matter what the motive may be which started the impulse,—we will infer that it is of the highest order,—*is she going to find in any general hospital in America which offers a post-graduate course of study and practical work one which will answer*

*her purpose?* Is she going to find a clearly defined course of practical work, with corresponding lectures and classes under careful supervision and capable instructors in the special branches she desires, or in practical hospital housekeeping and administration, such as outlined earlier in this paper, or is she going to a hospital to go on duty at seven A.M. to stay on till seven P.M., doing the ward scrubbing in addition to the actual care of the patient? Is this the kind of work the graduate nurse needs? It is certainly not what she desires. We see her being used too often for the benefit of the hospital to fill in gaps or help out during vacations. Even if the motives and ideals of the graduates are not always of the highest, or she is unbusinesslike in her methods, objects to criticism, and is lacking in many other directions, is there not something to be said on her side as well.

The principal criticism made by those who are attempting the management of such courses of study is the great lack of uniformity in the applicants. This will always exist as long as the country is filled with small hospitals conducting training-schools, using the nurse frequently as a means of revenue, and often compelled to admit women of inferior education from necessity, sending them out at the end of two years untrained, untaught, and undisciplined. The adoption of a uniform curriculum, the inauguration of State board examinations and registration, the exchange system and affiliations of schools, and the preparatory course may in time correct this condition, but for the present it exists and must be met.

We find established in all the leading colleges (and many of the smaller ones) and professional schools well arranged courses for post-graduate study. These are generally conducted at great expense, instructors being constantly employed whether there are many students or only one. For this reason it is generally conceded that the larger and richer university is in a better position for such work than the smaller college. It has also been found where the graduate work has been in connection with undergraduate work, or instructors are called upon to duplicate their teaching, that sooner or later the effect is felt and shown, either in the work of the graduate or that of the pupil. We find matriculation, tuition, laboratory, and graduating fees charged with living expenses additional. In the majority scholarships and fellowships are provided for and large libraries are accessible.

Judging from the experiences gained in the smaller college relative to conducting post-graduate courses of study, it certainly does not seem wise to undertake such a course in our smaller general hospitals under the present existing conditions.

The object of these investigations was to secure all the existing in-

formation relative to post-graduate study in America in training-schools for nurses and put it into such form as to be of value to those who might wish to pursue advanced work or study, and not to suggest means by which a course could be satisfactorily arranged. It is also far beyond the ability of the writer to solve this knotty problem.

Owing to the small amount of information obtained it has been impossible to arrange a table that would be of the slightest assistance to anyone.

An effort has been made to show the necessity for post-graduate work, also the demand on the part of the graduate nurses for such instruction. If this demand is sufficiently pressing to encourage some of our largest and best general hospitals and training-schools to arrange special courses of post-graduate work with corresponding theory to meet the several needs, previously mentioned, it seems the only practical solution to the problem, the applicant to pay a fee and living expenses, possibly live outside of the hospital, and not to be included in the nursing force.

Such a course would necessarily mean expense, which would be partially or perhaps entirely covered by the fees, as additional instructors and material would be necessary.

Unless such a course was endowed, it would not be practical for a hospital to undertake such a responsibility without an assured number of post-graduates yearly.

The teachers' course at Columbia College fills one long-felt want, but it is decidedly limited, as it does not prepare a nurse for the practical management of a hospital or a training-school, and although it may make a better teacher of her and prepare her theoretically, it cannot give her the technical training. Therefore it does not seem unreasonable to presume that its scope could be enlarged to include practical training and act as a "feeder" for hospitals willing to arrange the post-graduate courses herein suggested. There is nothing new or original in these meagre suggestions, and it is with considerable modesty that they are advanced at all, but it is hoped that the question will be taken up seriously by those better able to manage such important questions. It might be possible to appoint a special committee to investigate ways and means and finally arrange for a post-graduate course of study that would satisfy the most critical and fill this long-felt desire of the graduate nurse.

